[*Translation*]

Domestic Child Labour

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*182. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted any survey regarding the number of domestic child labourers below the age of 14 years and above, separately in Mumbai, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras and their working conditions;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for abolition of child labour at domestic level in the Metropolitan Cities in the country during the Eighth Five Year Plan period and proposed to be taken during the Ninth Five Year Plan?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) (a) to (c) The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 does not prohibit employment of children as domestic servants. The question of Government having conducted a survey of such children or having taken steps for abolition of such child labour does not, therefore, arise. Government, however, is committed to the goal eradication of child labour in all its forms.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the child labour Resolution and Prohibition Act, 1986 was enacted to abolish child Labour. But due to growing poverty in our country the children of poor people are compelled to spend their lives as domestic servants. Even after 50 years of Independence, poverty is prevailing in this country to such an extent that poor parents are compelled to sell their children to make both ends meet. It has also been mentioned in the reply that a law was enacted to abolish child labour but so far no action has been taken for abolition of child labour at domestic level.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, recently a national survey was conducted which revealed that number of domestic child labourers is increasing day-by-day especially in big cities.

[*English*]

"But the next conclusion is even more frightening. If this is the figure in minorities, it is 20 times more than the 1981 census figure."

MR. SPEAKER: You come to the question.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am coming to the question. An example of the survey conducted for Delhi has been mentioned in its report. It is stated in the report that:

[*English*]

"The Survey included 6997 domestic workers who were interviewed in 12 towns/cities and 12 districts of 8 States of the country. The results showed that child labour is a significant aspect of this unorganised sector."

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have any question to ask? We do not want all these statistics. Everybody knows it.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: It is a serious matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Because it is serious matter, you cannot give all these figures.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: It has been stated in the national survey conducted on domestic workers that:

[*English*]

"Sir, Karnataka has the highest percentage (30.48 per cent) of child labour engaged in domestic work."

[*Translation*]

As the hon. Minister has stated that so far child domestic servants are not covered under the child Labour Resolution and Prohibition Act. I would like to know from the Government as to when the proposed survey will be completed and by when action will be taken for abolition of domestic child labour on the basis of that survey.

[*English*]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, as you know, as far as child domestic servants are concerned, the Act has not mentioned anything about it.

Sir, we have asked the State Governments to send their comments to amend the Child Labour Regulation Act.

Coming to the point on survey, we have already convened a meeting of the State Labour Ministers. We have given clear directions to the State Governments to have surveys, in the first phase in the industries, of those children who are working in the hazardous industries. In the second phase we will be having a total survey in this respect.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue regarding child domestic servants is a delicate one. These children are compelled to work as domestic servants due to poverty of their parents. The main reason for it is the illiteracy and lack of awareness among these children. These child domestic servants are being exploited. I would like to know whether the Government proposed to hold a dialogue with the State Governments before conducting this survey to check exploitation of child domestic servants?

[*English*]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, it is a good suggestion, I will take it up with the State Governments.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, undoubtedly our children must grow as the loveliest flowers in the nation's garden. But that is not happening in many cases. The child labour has to be eradicated in a phased fashion because there are socio-economic factors that are involved in that. But the object must be to totally eradicate this problem.

In the end of 1994 or in the beginning of 1995 - I stand to be corrected - there was an international conference, I think it was a Non-aligned Conference of Labour Ministers, presided over by a very dynamic Labour Minister called Shri P.A. Sangma. In that particular Conference, India committed itself to an objective that as a first phase the Government would take up the complete eradication of children working in hazardous jobs. It was estimated that there are about two million such children. This was an objective which, under your Chairmanship, India committed itself to at an international conference.

I know about this because I was briefed later in Beijing about it. I was asked a number of questions and I remember very clearly in brief the number.

It is, now, almost three years since that commitment was undertaken. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what progress has been made, at least, towards the completion of that first phase objective of the elimination of child labour in hazardous jobs.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, as you know, on the Independence Day, the then Prime Minister Shri P.V. Narashimha Rao in his Address to the nation announced a programme of elimination of child labour working in hazardous occupations. After that a sequence of incidences have taken place.

We have had State Ministers Conference, we have had regional conferences and we have taken up the programme in the States also to eliminate the child labour working in hazardous industries. We have identified about two million children working in hazardous industries in the country.

Sir, as you know, in the programme to eliminate the child labour, national labour projects have been implemented in various States. Thereby, we are taking out the children from the hazardous occupations and putting them in special schools. We are giving them vocational training, we are giving them nutritious food and we are giving stipends to the parents of the children who are working in hazardous industries.

Recently, I had attended a conference, last week, in Netherlands. There also the concentration of the world was on the child labour working in the most intolerable conditions.

Therefore, Sir, our Government is taking all steps to eradicate child labour in the hazardous industries. At least, we will be able to eliminate it by the year 2002.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Can you quantify the impact?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, what the hon. Member wants to know is the progress that we have made so far. Can you tell us the number of special schools that have been established and the number of enrolment of children in these schools who are supposed to have been rescued? For these things, if you have the figures, you can give. I remember the figures.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Yes, I have the figures. So far we have established 1800 special schools in the country. We have enrolled about 1.05 lakh children in these schools.

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA: It is very poor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has told just now that effective measures have not been taken to deal with such a problems. The rules, regulations and laws enacted for this purpose could not provide any relief so far. Sir, through you, I would like to know as to whether the Government is contemplating to make any arrangements for containing the number of child domestic servants, so that their number may decrease in the coming years. What new provisions will be included in the laws for efficient implementation of the law?

[*English*]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: As far as child labour is concerned, if we see the statistics, it is coming down considerably. In 1981, it was 13.6 million according to the census. According to the National Sample Survey Record, it was 17.02 million in 1987-88. According to 1991 census, it has come down considerably, that is, 11.28 million children.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, parents do not send their children voluntarily to work but circumstances compel them to do so. The practice of child labour will continue if that circumstances are not changed. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to say that in Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh several children are engaged in manufacturing slates and pencils. It is dangerous work and several child labourers become victim of untimely death. I would like to know as to what action has been taken or proposed to be taken to abolish child labour in slate and pencil industry?

[*English*]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, I clearly mentioned that the children have to work in a specific time. I think the implementing agencies are the State Governments. If there is any lapse on the part of the State Government and if

you bring it to my notice, I will take it up with the State Government.

[*Translation*]

SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a serious matter. Sir, it was dealt by you and myself also. I would like to know the statistics regarding budget allocation made for it last year to the Labour Ministry and how much was spent out of that allocation. I would like to get figures regarding allocation of funds and the funds utilised on the programme. Mr. Speaker, Sir, our efforts were nullified. I would like to know the figures regarding budget allocation for the programme and its implementation by the State Government. They keep on saying that the slogan for child Labour abolition is being implemented but no attention is being paid towards it.

[*English*]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, in the Budget for the year 1995-96, an amount of about Rs.34.40 crore has been earmarked. We have almost spent all the money. In 1996-97, Rs.56 crore has been earmarked in the Budget. I do not have the figure of the expenditure as to how much we have spent.

SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY: That is important. What is the expenditure? You please tell me.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: I will collect it and give it to you.

SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY: You must give your reply to the question properly.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: All right. Apart from that, this particular supplementary is not related to this question. The hon. Member should understand that.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the Minister is right because the question specifically relates to child labour in the domestic service, at home. The Minister is not supposed to have all the figures about the entire child labour problem. It is confined to domestic servants.

[*Translation*]

SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY: Do we not have any right to speak on this issue. I would like to know the budget allocation spent on it.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have the figure?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: I do not have it, I will give it to him.

Foreign Investment In Television Network

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*183. PROF. P.J. KURIEN:
SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to privatise/commercialise one of the channels of Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any code of conduct has been formulated in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have also decided to allow foreign firms to buy DD-3;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(g) its impact on other channels of Doordarshan?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) (a) to (g) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Government is exploring the feasibility of obtaining external assistance to meet the cost of the projected expansion of the terrestrial network of Doordarshan's DD-3 channel in order to enable a larger segment of Indian viewers gain access to it. The specific modalities in this regard have not yet been decided.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) As in (a) & (b) above.

(g) Since DD-3 expected to meet the requirement of niche audience/viewers, it may not have effect on other channels.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: I have put a specific question to the hon. Minister as to whether the Government intends to privatise the DD-3. He has given an answer saying that the Government is exploring the possibility of obtaining external assistance. But elsewhere he has been reported to have said that the Government intends to privatise the DD-3. It has been reported in the Press. External assistance is no privatisation. Therefore, I would like to ask a specific question and I want a specific answer as to whether the Government intends privatising the DD-3 channel. If the answer is 'yes', I would like to know the rationale of doing that, in view of the fact that a comprehensive Broadcasting Bill is pending which the Government has been promising again and again. Does it mean that the Government does not intend to bring that Boradcasting Bill and further I would like to know, in case of privatisation how will the Government keep a tag on the quality of the programme?

SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: I think the whole confusion is about the reply; assistance or participation or the private individuals. Even in today's briefing meeting I observed this. In my Press statement outside I had said that DD-1 and DD-2 were Government channels. To expand DD-3 I need,